

THE CLAIMS DEFINING THE INVENTION ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. A forms development platform for developing forms, comprising:
 - 5 an attribute design module to graphically design reusable form attributes from a selection of predetermined fields, the attributes having integrated business logic;
 - a form design module to graphically design reusable forms using the form attributes, the forms having integrated business logic; and
 - 10 a project design module to design reusable projects by graphically arranging the forms according to a predetermined process flow; wherein the design modules operate independently from each other such that the design of the attributes, forms and projects are separate functions, and designed attributes, forms and the projects are stored as separate entities.
- 15 2. The platform according to claim 1, further comprising an attribute library to store designed attributes, a form library to store designed forms and a project library to store designed projects.
- 20 3. The platform according to claim 1 or 2, further comprising a validation engine to validate a form.
4. The platform according to claim 3, wherein the form is validated against an open standard or validated against an internal business policy of a business.
- 25 5. The platform according to claim 3 or 4, wherein the form is validated to comply with a security policy such as checking for SQL or script injection.
- 30 6. The platform according to claim 4, wherein the internal business policy is stored in a validation policy repository to facilitate re-usability.
7. The platform according to any one of the preceding claims, further comprising an approval system to enable forms to be approved prior to publishing.

8. The platform according to claim 7, wherein the approval system is a centralised system.
9. The platform according to claim 7 or 8, wherein the approval system includes:
 - 5 an Inbox to allow access to individual forms associated with certain users;
 - an Out-of-Office Mechanism to allow users to indicate an out-of-office status and specify route re-direction or alternative actions;
 - a Forms Archive to allow forms to be searchable and filtered;
10. Printing module to allow forms to be printed in a printer-friendly format;
Export module to allow users to export form data in XML or other formats;
or
an Administration module to allow remote configuration and monitoring of all forms and their associated routing processes.
15. 10. The platform according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the form is interpreted to generate a form or series of related forms in HTML, Wireless Markup Language (WML) or other language for presentation on a specific device or operating system.
20. 11. The platform according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the predetermined fields includes input fields such as text fields, password fields or image fields.
25. 12. The platform according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the attribute designer module specifies validation, error message and dependencies for form controls within an attribute.
13. The platform according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the attributes are hierarchically designed.
30. 14. The platform according to claim 13, wherein validation of a form is nested at predetermined levels.
35. 15. The platform according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the form designer module designs page flows.

16. The platform according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the form designer module specifies validation, error messages and dependencies for attributes, sections and pages within a form.
- 5 17. The platform according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the form designer module specifies list iterators, action types, paging mechanism, pre-form and post-form processing and form persistence.
- 10 18. The platform according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein backend business services are linked to the predetermined process flow.
19. The platform according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the form designer module also designs forms with sections and pages.
- 15 20. The platform according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the project designer module centrally manages styles, messages, and plugins for a project.
- 20 21. The platform according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the project designer module specifies list iterators, access control, configurations and a publishing mechanism.
- 25 22. The platform according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein business logic contained within designed attributes and forms includes validation rules for form input while data is being entered.
23. The platform according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein business logic contained within designed attributes and forms includes equations or calculators to generate a useful result.
- 30 24. A method for developing forms, comprising the steps of:
graphically designing reusable form attributes from a selection of predetermined fields, the attributes having integrated business logic;
graphically designing reusable forms using the form attributes, the forms having integrated business logic; and
designing reusable projects by graphically arranging the forms according to a predetermined process flow;
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wherein the design of the attributes, forms and projects are separate functions, and designed attributes, forms and the projects are stored as separate entities.

- 5 25. A form developed by the method according to claim 24.
- 10 26. The method according to claim 24, further comprising the step of providing a graphical user interface to allow a user to perform the steps of graphically designing reusable form attributes, graphically designing reusable forms and designing reusable projects.
- 15 27. A computer program product comprised of a computer-readable medium for carrying computer-executable instructions for:
graphically designing reusable form attributes from a selection of predetermined fields, the attributes having integrated business logic;
graphically designing reusable forms using the form attributes, the forms having integrated business logic; and
designing reusable projects by graphically arranging the forms according to a predetermined process flow;
- 20 wherein the design of the attributes, forms and projects are separate functions, and designed attributes, forms and the projects are stored as separate entities.